

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-3, 5-34, and 37-40 were presented for examination in the present application. The instant amendment cancels claims 9, 19-34, and 38 without prejudice. Thus, claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-18, 37, and 39-40 are presented for consideration upon entry of the instant amendment. Claims 1, 37, 39, and 40 are independent.

**Independent claim 19, as well as dependent claims 20-34, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 or 103 over European Patent No. EP 0 280 905 to Kobori et al. (Kobori). Independent claim 38 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 or 103 over Kobori.**

Claims 19-34 and 38 have been cancelled, rendering this rejection moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 19-34 and 38 are respectfully requested.

**Independent claims 1 and 37, as well as dependent claims 2-3 and 5-18, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Kobori. Dependent claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Kobori in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,426,768 to Black et al. (Black).**

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite that the step of producing the joining element comprises "structuring the joining element by a lift-off technique comprising patterning a photoresist-layer, applying the material by evaporation coating, dissolving the photoresist-layer to remove the evaporated layer thereon".

Similarly, independent claim 37 has been amended to recite that the step of applying the frame comprises "structuring a glass layer by a lift-off technique comprising patterning a photoresist-layer, applying the material by evaporation coating, and dissolving the photoresist-layer to remove the evaporated layer thereon".

The Office Action acknowledges, with respect to claim 9, that Kobori fails to disclose or suggestion a lift-off technique. Rather, the Office Action asserts that Black discloses a lift-off technique. Applicants submit that Black fails to disclose or suggest the lift-off technique now recited by claims 1 and 37.

First, Black merely discloses that borosilicate glass is deposited in a layer 38. See col. 4, lines 25-26. However, Black does not teach or suggest that this deposition of the glass layer 38 occurs by evaporation coating as now claimed.

Furthermore, Black discloses that after the borosilicate glass layer 38 is deposited, a scrubbing etch is used to lift off that portion of the layer that is above the photoresist layer 37. Clearly, the scrubbing etch of Black does not teach or suggest dissolving the photoresist-layer as now claimed.

Accordingly, amended claims 1 and 37, as well as claims 2-3 and 5-18 that depend therefrom, are in condition for allowance over the proposed combination of Kobori and Black. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-18, and 37 are respectfully requested.

**Independent claims 39 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 over Kobori.**

Independent claims 39 and 40 have each been amended to recite that the plurality of nested frame joining elements are nested inside one another.

Applicants respectfully submit that the borosilicate glass layers 32 of Kobori are not frame joining elements that are nested inside one another as claimed. Rather, the borosilicate glass layers 32 of Kobori are merely formed on the surface of the wafer 10. See col. 4, lines 47-50.

Accordingly, amended claims 39 and 40 are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to claims 39 and 40 are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Such action is solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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